

Appendix A: Scoping Report

Introduction

On March 13, 2008, the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest (MBSNF) mailed government-to-government notices to local Tribes. On March 14, 2008, the MBSNF mailed public scoping notices to interested citizens, groups, industry, and agencies on the Darrington Ranger District mailing list. The notices summarized the Suiattle Access and Travel Management (ATM) Project and inviting comments to be addressed in the associated NEPA review. The proposal includes road decommissioning, road closure, and road upgrading in the Suiattle watershed.

The March 20, 2008, Quarterly Schedule of Proposed Actions also included the proposal. On April 8, 2008, as part of the public involvement process, the agency held an open house public meeting at the Darrington Ranger Station. The Forest Service received 33 comment letters to the 2008 scoping effort.

On March 28, 2010, the Forest Service mailed the Darrington District Newsletter out to interested parties, which included the proposal. In 2010, the Forest received two comment letters referencing the proposal in the District Newsletter.

Comment letters were received from 3 agencies, 8 organizations and 20 individuals. The scoping notice and comment letters are available in the Project Record.

This report identifies commenters, comments received, and the disposition of those comments.

Results

Table A-19 lists each comment letter, the name of the commenter, the code number assigned to it, the comment, and the section of this report where each comment is addressed.

Processing of Comments

Methodologically, a key step in the scoping process is determining which comments affect the scope of the NEPA analysis and which do not. Comments that do not affect the scope of the analysis include those that:

- Express an opinion without an associated issue or concern.
- Are outside the scope of the decision to be made.
- Are addressed by other regulations, laws, or higher-level decisions (e.g., the Forest Plan).
- Are conjectural or not supported by science.

The 35 letters received included comments associated with this NEPA process as well as various resource areas. Given the limited number of comments received, all are addressed in this report regardless of whether they affect the scope of analysis.

“Significant” issues are those that help to formulate alternatives, prescribe mitigation measures, or analyze environmental effects. No significant issues were identified.

Note that two or more comments may be addressed by a single discussion.

Process

Most process questions do not have the potential to affect the scope of the EA *per se* (suggested alternatives and some others being the exception). As a result, most are addressed in discussion in this report. Some of the major process comments may be addressed in various sections of EA Chapters 1 and 2.

Proposed Action

The following comments and questions were raised. None affect the scope of the analysis.

Table A-19. Scoping Comments

Commenter	ID	Date	Category	Comment	Road of Concern	Disposition and Where Comment is Addressed
Sharrie Brewer	1	3/17/2008	Lack of drivable access	Dismayed at rd.closures:Tenas, Circle Cr., Rd. 2510- important for tribal cultural values and berries. Popular day-use destinations.	2660. 2703, 2510	Proposed Action, Recreation, Cultural
Eric Hankam	2	3/18/2008	Lack of access, day hikes	Pleased with proposal to maintain Grade Cr. Rd. 2640/2642 and Green Mt. 2680. keep open 2703 to Circle Peak - one of the most rewarding day-hikes. Would welcome a meeting with DR.	2640/2642, 2680, 2703	Recreation, Cultural
Nancy Brodie	3	3/28/2008	Support for ATM effort	Desire vehicle access to Green Mt.and Suiattle, support for timber harvesting if proceeds go to maintaining roads and hiking trails	2680, 26	Proposed Action, Recreation
Bill Lider	4	3/29/2008	Concern with: Incomplete information, type of analysis, law enforcement, rd. treatments and District in general	Recommends complete river study in Suiattle, definitions of terms, work to meet DOE 2005 standards, budget shift from other areas to roads, enforcement increase to prevent OHV use, detailed budget of rd. maintenance . RD storage - removal of all culverts and first 1/4 mile of rd treated to prevent OHV use. EIS for Boundary Bridge and south side road, including the White Chuck. Benefit/cost analysis for entire project.	all roads	Proposed Action, Recreation, Transportation
Richard Ward	5	3/30/2008	Support for ATM effort	Promotes Green Mt. accessible to all users, plus other roads not within the Suiattle.	2680	Proposed Action, Recreation
Jeremy Boyer	6	4/5/2008	Concern with decommissioning, keep roads open to sedan travel	Does not want roads decommissioned - there are few roads overall. Let natural events take out roads - don't spend tax money to decommission. Use money to keep roads open to sedan travel. Do not decommission Tenas Creek road	2660	Proposed Action, Recreation
Janet Putz	7	4/5/2008	Green Mt. access	Desires vehicle access to Green Mtn.without downgrade to Level II maintenance	2680	Proposed Action, Recreation
Michele Coad	8	4/5/2008	Green Mt. access	Concern that access is proposed for high clearance vehicles only	2680	Proposed Action, Recreation

Commenter	ID	Date	Category	Comment	Road of Concern	Disposition and Where Comment is Addressed
Kim Brown	9	4/6/2008	Access preferences	Maintain Green Mtn for passenger vehicles, Tenas creek - if closed, convert to trail, Road 27 and Road 25 - maintain for future use. Concerned with illegal use of roads	2680, 27 and 25	Proposed Action, Recreation
Tom Davenport	10	4/7/2008	Concern with decommissioning, lack of access to desirable back country areas	Concern with Maintenance level II for Green Mtn, and decommissioning proposal for Tenas Creek-lack of access. Disagrees with aquatic high risk of roads, sees issue as funding. Asks for efforts to find funding vs. decommissioning. Attached link to hiking/backpacking areas accessed by road 2660.	2660 and 2680	Proposed Action, Recreation, Fisheries, Water and Soil
Tom Bentzen	11	4/7/2008	Concern with decommissioning, lack of access to back country lakes	Concern with Maintenance level II for Green Mtn, and decommissioning proposal for Tenas Creek. Concern that USFS is justifying decommissioning due to lack of funding - find ways to restore roads vs. closure.	2660 and 2680	Proposed Action, Recreation, Transportation
Jim Scarborough	12	4/7/2008	Favors even more decommissioning	Appreciates rd. decommissioning proposed for Circle and Tenas Creek - doesn't go far enough. Views Rd. 27 as a menace to health of Straight Cr. Concern with Rd. 26 and interactions with the Suiattle River -harmful to Wild and Scenic River status. Proposes RD. 26 be converted to trail from Rd. 2680 to end of Rd. 26.	2703, 2660, 26, 27	Recreation, Water and Soils, Other Alternatives Not Considered In Detail
Andrew Engelson - WTA editor	13	4/8/2008	Acess to Green Mt.	Maintain 2680 to passenger vehicle standards-keep road accessible to fuel efficient vehicles and to a higher standard to avoid erosion and runoff	2680	Proposed Action, Recreation
Bob Boyd	14	4/8/2008	Access	Concern that the promise of tourism after closure of forest to logging is being compromised by road closures. Concerned that there are funds to eradicate roads, but not maintain them. Concern that leaving log jams on river increases risks to roads and fish habitat. Concern that managers do not stand up to special interest groups.	all roads	Recreation, Cultural, Fisheries, Transportation

Commenter	ID	Date	Category	Comment	Road of Concern	Disposition and Where Comment is Addressed
Thomas Hammond	15	4/8/2008	Support ATM proposal with additional closures	Support for closure of Tenas and Circle Ck. Roads. Supports additional closures of Rd. 26 before Downey Cr. Bridge. Close roads 2642, 2640, fully decommission 1510,1511, 2512, and 1515. Give up on Rd. 27.	most all roads	Proposed Action, Other Alternatives Not Considered In Detail, Vegetation, Wildlife, Fisheries, Water and Soil
Kathy Murray	16	4/10/2008	Repair major roads to trailheads	Favor repair of Rd. 26 to trailheads and to Green Mountain for passenger vehicles	26, 2680	Proposed Action, Recreation
John Edwards	17	4/14/2008	Support ATM proposal with additional closures	Support for closure of Tenas and Circle Ck. Roads. Supports additional closures of Rd. 26 due to concerns with "blue clay". Maintain Rd. 26 access to Buck Cr. (but not beyond Downey Cr) and to Green Mt. Supports foot/cycle traffic across Boundary Bridge.	26, 660, 2680, 2703 ,Boundary Bridge	Proposed Action, Other Alternatives Not Considered In Detail, Recreation
Brain Polagye	18	4/14/2008	Support ATM plan with retention of roads to trails	Retain Tenas Cr. Road to trailhead for access to backcountry. Concern that we would repair the Tenas Cr. bridge for access to decommission the road. Does not see benefit to public of this action	2660	Proposed Action, Recreation
Phil Leatherman	19	4/14/2008	Support ATM plan with additional decommissioning	Supports closure of Circle Cr. And Tenas Cr. Road conversion to walkable tread. Support closure of Rd. 26 at Downey Cr. - walk in to Sulphur campground. Recommends a road to trail for Rd. 27	2703, 2660, 26, 27	Proposed Action, Other Alternatives Not Considered In Detail
Richard Edwards	20	4/14/2008	Supports ATM plan	Supports 2661 and 2510 for decommissioning vs. storage. Recommends Rd. 26 not be open to the end. - too expensive and risky.	2661, 2510, 26	Proposed Action, Other Alternatives Not Considered In Detail, Vegetation, Wildlife
Denise Cornwell	21	4/14/2008	Rd. 26 only	Maintain and improve the first 10 miles of Rd. 26	26	Proposed Action

Commenter	ID	Date	Category	Comment	Road of Concern	Disposition and Where Comment is Addressed
Catherine Cook	22	4/14/2008	Keep road open to trails	Protests decommissioning of Tenas Cr. and downgrading the Green Mountain Rd. maintenance level. Keep roads open, given that other roads are storm damaged. New Congress may be more amenable to USFS budget needs for roads and trails	2660, roads to trails	Proposed Action, Recreation
Jen Watkins - Conservation Northwest	23	4/14/2008	Support ATM planning, wildlife values, fish passage, and funding with political will and partnerships	Support ATM list of rds. for decommissioning with addition of rd. 2510 and 2540. Concern that a timeframe be developed for stewardship thinning proposals. Support use of rd. 2670 for reroute with decommissioning of old Rd. 26 section. Discuss maintenance issue of avalanche paths across road to Green Mt. - 2680	all roads, avalanche paths across 2680 - discuss solutions in EA	Proposed Action, Transportation, Vegetation, Wildlife
Kathy Johnson - Pilchuck Audubon	24	4/14/2008	Support ATM planning for minimum rds. Address OHVs, ATM impacts on air, water quality, wildlife, forest res. and non-motorized recreation	Support for ATM proposal with additional closures. Recommends Rd. 26 be addressed in an EIS. Propose closing Rd. 26 at Downey Cr. Decommission Rd. 27. Question how road decommissioning would limit non-motorized rec. access. Need to address "ghost roads" used by OHV. EA should present a broad range of alternatives. Disappointed with zero roads to trails.	all roads, but particularly Rds: 2703, 2660, 26, 27 and "ghost" roads used by OHVs	Proposed Action, Other Alternatives Not Considered In Detail, Recreation,
Kevin Geraghty - North Cascades Conservation Council	25	4/14/2008	Support ATM planning with additional considerations for road decommissioning, esp. end of Rd. 26	Close road 2642 back at intersection of 070 and 080. Do not downgrade rd. 2642 maintenance-will becomes no maintenance. Decommission rds. 2510, 2511, and Rd. 2641 and 2661 due to hydrologic concerns of inner gorge crossings. Level1 maintenance should receive same treatment as decommissioning. Rd. 26 should be treated in separate NEPA doc. due to risk and expense of road work. Propose at least a partial decommissioning. Defer decisions on 2680 until after decision on rd. 26. Decommission Rd. 27. Close "ghost" roads.	All roads - particularly rd. 26	Proposed Action, Other Alternatives Not Considered In Detail, Vegetation, Wildlife, Fisheries, Water and Soil

Commenter	ID	Date	Category	Comment	Road of Concern	Disposition and Where Comment is Addressed
Jim McNerny	26	4/15/2008	Access to trailheads	Restore access on the Suiattle to Sulphur Creek. Keep Tenas Creek Rd. open to boulder Cr. Trailhead. Maintain Green Mountain road open to vehicles.	26, 2660, 2680	Proposed Action, Recreation
Jim Kuesman - http://www.hikingnorthwest.com	27	4/15/2008	Access to backcountry - trailheads and short day hikes	Maintain passenger vehicle access to Green Mountain trailhead (a priority), and Tenas Cr. to Boulder Lake trailhead. Maintain access to Circle and Meadow Mt. - question: how does one access the brand new trail on Circle to Crystal? Emphasis areas; Green Mt., Tenas Creek, Circle Peak and Meadow Mountain.	26, 2680, 2703, 27	Proposed Action, Recreation
Andrea Imler	28	4/15/2008	access to Tenas/Green mt.	Maintain vehicle access for passenger vehicles to Tenas Creek and Green Mt. Provide access to alpine lakes	26, 2660 and 2680	Proposed Action, Recreation
Jonathan Guzzo - WA. Trails Association	29	4/15/2008	Hiker access to backcountry	Support ATM proposal with addition of passenger vehicle maintenance to Green Mt. trailhead. Concern that Tenas cr. Road decommissioning not proposed for road to trail conversion..	26, 2680, 2660	Proposed Action, Recreation
Paul Wagner	30	4/24/2008	Meet forest plan and USFS national objectives, access to trails and backcountry	Inconsistency of road closures with chief of USFS' message of reconnecting kids in woods. Maintain access to Circle Peak (Rd. 2703) and to Boulder Lake (Rd. 2660). Put money into maintenance of roads vs. closing roads - treat specific area to benefit aq.res., Maintain strong community relationships. Repair Boundary Bridge.	26, 2703, 2660,25	Proposed Action, Alternatives Considered.
Ken Osborn - Grandy Lake	31	4/24/2008	access for forest stand management	Mainlines be upgraded which access second growth stands for stand improvement. Reconstruct Boundary Bridge. Make map correction - USFS purchase of 70 ac. Private	mainline roads, Boundary Bridge	Proposed Action
George Winters	32	4/6/2010	acces to Tenas Cr Rd/Boulder River Trailhead/ Circle Cr	Not clear about range of alternatives being considered in ATM. Desire more information re: where Rd 2660 will be closed, if Rd 2660 will be kept open to Boulder River Trailhead, and what is being considered for Rd 2703.	2660, 2703	Proposed Action, Recreation

Commenter	ID	Date	Category	Comment	Road of Concern	Disposition and Where Comment is Addressed
Tribal comments						
Victoria Yeager Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians	33	4/20/2008	Notice of project in culturally significant area	If human remains encountered - stop work and secure area for proper authorities. Use caution around wetlands and any streams that may contain habitat for salmon	no specific roads	Mitigation Measures and Design Features, Fisheries
James Joseph Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe	34	4/25/2008	access and tribal resources	Important to maintain roads for elders, young children and young adults. Today's generations work outside jobs to earn a living - little time to walk miles and miles for quality teaching time and gathering. Access to traditional medicinal plants and locations is important to tribe's traditions. Loss of roads will hinder recording archeological sites. Access important for potential fire management of openings for wildlife and berries. Stand management important for younger cedars to peel for bark - baskets and other products. Various areas important based on local plants or wildlife. . Examples provided of sites where access has been lost or complicated due to roads being built on trails and then decommissioned - no access: Boulder Cr., Squire Cr. Pass, Clear Cr. , Falls Cr. White Chuck, Pugh Mt., the Suiattle drainage, Tenas Cr, and Green Mtn.	The Suiattle drainage, Tenas Cr, Circle Cr., Captain Moses Seed Orchard, and Green Mtn.	Proposed Action, Recreation, Vegetation Management
Jon-Paul Shannahan	35	5/4/2010	concern for proper road treatments and spawning habitat	important to treat stored or decommissioned roads properly, replace culverts and other barriers to proper size, and protect spawning habitat for listed Spring Chinook stock in Suiattle drainage. Tribe interested in partnering with FS on some road assessment work on South side roads.	no specific roads	Proposed Action, Soil & Water, Fisheries

Commenter	ID	Date	Category	Comment	Road of Concern	Disposition and Where Comment is Addressed
Janice Maybee, Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe	36	8/10/2010	Circle Creek access	Please keep this road open so we can continue to access this area to maintain our cultural practices in this region.	Circle Creek Road 2670	Proposed Action, Soil & Water, Fisheries, Heritage and Treaty Resouces